IN THE CLAIMS

This is a complete and current listing of the claims, marked with status identifiers in parentheses. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) An electromechanical switching device, comprising:

~~having~~ a main contact including ~~(2) which comprises~~ a number of main fixed contacts ~~(4)~~ and a moveable main contact bridge ~~(3),~~;

an auxiliary contact ~~(5)~~ which leads during the switch-on process and which ~~comprises~~ includes a number of auxiliary fixed contacts ~~(7)~~ and a moveable auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6),~~; and

a contact bridge carrier, ~~(8) which is~~ provided for ~~the purpose of~~ actuating the main contact bridge ~~(3)~~ and the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~, wherein at least one of the contact ~~parts~~s ~~(3, 4, 6, 7) being~~are mounted in a sprung manner, wherein ~~characterized in that~~two stable positions of the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~ relative to the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~ are provided, and

when the switching device is switched on, the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~ in its first stable position closing the

auxiliary contact ~~(5)~~ which leads the main contact ~~(2)~~ by the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~ being actuated, and

when the switching device is switched off, the auxiliary contact ~~(5)~~ with the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~ located in the second stable position opening before the main contact ~~(2)~~ by the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~ being actuated in the opposite direction.

2. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein, during the switch-on process, the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6) can be moved~~is movable over into its second stable position ~~by means of~~via the mechanical action of the auxiliary fixed contacts ~~(7)~~ on the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~.

3. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~wherein, during the switch-on process, the change, which is triggered by the actuation of the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~, between the first and the second stable position of the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~ once the main contact ~~(2)~~ has closed, can trigger an opening of the auxiliary contact ~~(5)~~.

4. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in ~~one of~~ claim~~s~~ 1 ~~to 3~~, ~~characterized in that~~wherein, during the

switch-off process, the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6) can be moved~~is movable over into its first stable position ~~by means of~~via the mechanical action of at least one stop ~~(11)~~ on the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~.

5. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in ~~one of~~ claim~~s~~ 1 ~~to 4~~, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~ is in the form of a snap-action spring.

6. (Currently Amended) An electromechanical switching device, comprising:

~~having~~ a main contact ~~(2) which comprises~~including a number of main fixed contacts ~~(4)~~ and a moveable main contact bridge ~~(3),~~;

an auxiliary contact ~~(5)~~ which leads during the switch-on process and which ~~comprises~~ includes a number of auxiliary fixed contacts ~~(7)~~ and a moveable auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6),~~; and

a contact bridge carrier ~~(8) which is~~, ~~provided~~ for ~~the purpose of~~ actuating the main contact bridge ~~(3)~~ and the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~, wherein at least one of the contact ~~parts (3, 4, 6, 7) being~~ is mounted in a sprung manner, wherein

~~characterized in that~~

two stable positions of at least one auxiliary fixed contact ~~(7)~~ are provided, and

when the switching device is switched on, the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~ making contact with the auxiliary fixed contact ~~(7)~~ in its first stable position by the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~ being actuated and in the process closing the auxiliary contact ~~(5)~~ before the main contact ~~(2)~~, and

when the switching device is switched off, the auxiliary contact ~~(5)~~ with the auxiliary fixed contact ~~(7)~~ located in the second stable position opening before the main contact ~~(2)~~ by the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~ being actuated in the opposite direction.

7. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in claim 6, ~~characterized in that~~wherein, during the switch-on process, the auxiliary fixed contact ~~(7) can be moved~~is movable over into

its second stable position ~~by means of~~via the mechanical action of the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~ on the auxiliary fixed contact ~~(7)~~.

8. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in claim 7, ~~characterized in that~~wherein, during the switch-on process, the change, which is triggered by the actuation of the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~, between the first and the

second stable position of the auxiliary fixed contact ~~(7)~~ once the main contact ~~(2)~~ has closed, can trigger an opening of the auxiliary contact ~~(5)~~.

9. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in ~~one of~~ claims ~~6 to 8~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein, during the switch-off process, the auxiliary fixed contact ~~(7) can be move~~ movies movable~~d~~ over into its first stable position ~~by means of the~~ via mechanical action of at least one stop ~~(11)~~ on the auxiliary fixed contact ~~(7)~~.

10. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in ~~one of~~ claims ~~6 to 9~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the auxiliary fixed contact ~~(7)~~ is in the form of a snap-action spring.

11. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in ~~one of~~ claims ~~6 to 10~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein two auxiliary fixed contacts ~~(7)~~ are arranged at least approximately symmetrically with respect to the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~.

12. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in ~~one of~~ claims ~~1 to 11~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the main contact bridge ~~(3)~~ and the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~ are arranged at least approximately parallel to one another.

13. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in ~~one of~~ claim~~s~~ ~~1 to 12~~, ~~characterized in that~~wherein at least one of the contact bridges ~~(3, 6)~~ is arranged at least approximately perpendicular to the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~.

14. (Currently Amended) The switching device as claimed in ~~one of~~ claim~~s~~ ~~1 to 13~~, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the auxiliary contact bridge ~~(6)~~ is mounted in the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~ at a suspension point ~~(10)~~, which cannot be displaced relative to the contact bridge carrier ~~(8)~~.

15. (New) The switching device as claimed in claim 2, wherein, during the switch-off process, the auxiliary contact bridge is movable over into its first stable position via the mechanical action of at least one stop on the auxiliary contact bridge.

16. (New) The switching device as claimed in claim 3, wherein, during the switch-off process, the auxiliary contact bridge is movable over into its first stable position via the mechanical action of at least one stop on the auxiliary contact bridge.

17. (New) The switching device as claimed in claim 7, wherein, during the switch-off process, the auxiliary fixed contact movies movable over into its first stable position via

mechanical action of at least one stop on the auxiliary fixed contact.

18. (New) The switching device as claimed in claim 8, wherein, during the switch-off process, the auxiliary fixed contact movies movable over into its first stable position via mechanical action of at least one stop on the auxiliary fixed contact.

19. (New) The switching device as claimed in claim 6, wherein the main contact bridge and the auxiliary contact bridge are arranged at least approximately parallel to one another.

20. (New) The switching device as claimed in claim 6, wherein at least one of the contact bridges is arranged at least approximately perpendicular to the contact bridge carrier.

21. (New) The switching device as claimed in claim 6, wherein the auxiliary contact bridge is mounted in the contact bridge carrier at a suspension point, which cannot be displaced relative to the contact bridge carrier.